Beginning of gold exploration

566. SHRI JAGIR SINGH DARD:
DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether anywhere in the country has the gold exploration begun; and

(b) if so, the details thereof; if not when will it begin?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDERA PRASAD BHAISHYA): (a) and (b) Exploration of mineral resources including gold is a continuous activity, Geological Survey of India (GSI) is a premier organisation in the country in mineral exploration. The GSI has undertaken gold investigation during the last 3 years (1994-1997) in the States of Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Sikkim, West Bengal, Andaman Island, Bihar, Assam and Meghalaya.

Negotiations with Continental Resource Ltd. of Canada

567. SHRI SANATAN BISI: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that for mining purposes in "Gandamardan" the Government of Orissa is negotiating with Continental Resource Limited of Canada as reported in daily Oriya "Anupam Bharat" dated 29th August, 1997; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As per the information furnished by the State Govt. of Orissa, a Joint Venture agreement has been signed on 16.4.1997 between M/s Orissa Mining Corporation Limited (OMC), a State Government Undertaking and M/s Continental Resources Limited, Canada (CRL) for the sole purpose of exploring and exploiting the Gandhamardan Bauxite deposits. State Govt. of Orissa have also informed that M/s OMC have filed three applications for grant of Mining Leases in Gandhamardan Bauxite deposit area.

Rehabilitation of BGML

568. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken steps to rehabilitate BGML at Kolar Gold Fields through joint venture by induction of a private co-promoter;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether there is any possibility of winding up the above company under the provisions of the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A Committee has been constituted under the Chairmanship of the Additional Secretary, Ministry of Mines, to identify a co-promoter(s) for the purpose of revival and rehabilitation of BGML at Kolar Gold Fields.

(c) In case a suitable co-promoter for rehabilitating the company through Joint Venture could not be found the future of the Company will be decided as per the relevant provisions of the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, (SICA), 1985.

Negotiations with foreign firms for prospecting diamonds and gold

569. SHRIMATI JAYAPRADA NAHATA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether negotiations are going on with foreign firms for prospecting